(iv) Effective vigilance all along the Indo-Pak border is maintained through patrolling by BSF with additional support from state police.

(v) Militant cadres in J&K have suffered heavy casualties and many outfits have lost their top ranking leaders. In Punjab a break-through has been achieved in many recent cases and several suspects of left over Punjab militants group who have cross-border linkages have been arrested.

(vi) Vigilance along Indo-Nepal border is also being strengthened.

ULFA Rebel Camps in Bhutan

2406. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ULFA rebels have set up camps in the forests inside the territory of Bhutan for launching violent attacks in Assam;

(b) if so, whether the matter has been taken up with the Government of Bhutan; and

(c) Bhutanese Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The matter has been taken up with the Government of Bhutan and the Bhutanese authorities are extending cooperation.

Freedom Fighters Pension

2407. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the State affairs of pension to freedom fighters in Assam;

(b) if so, how many cases are pending

(c) what action Government propose to take to ensure the payment of pension to all eligible freedom fighters in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) Yes.

(b) All applications received within prescribed time limit i.e. 31.3.1982 from Assam have been considered and decisions communicated to the applicants However, many review petitions and some delayed cases continue to be received. This is an on going process.

(c) Does not arise.

Diversion of Border and Security Ftnds in Assam

2408. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that funds meant for border road and security are being diverted in Assam to check infiltration from Bangladesh;

(b) if so, what is the quantum of such funds; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to check such diversion of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) Government of Asiam diverted an amount of Rs. 504.82 lakhs to other State Works out of funds released for the construction of Border Roads and Fence upto 31.3.1996.

(c) After considering options like entrusting the execution of works to an agency other than the State Public Works Department in the Technical Committee and the High Level Empowered Committee for the Indo-Bangladesh Border Roads and Fencing Project, the matter was taken up with the State

Government and further release of funds pending utilisation of the diverted amount was stopped. An amount of Rs. 345.38 lakhs out of the diverted amount of Rs. 504.82 lakhs has so far been released by the State Government to the executing agency up to May, 1997. The State Government has been directed to release the remaining amount of Rs. 159.44 lakhs also to the executing agency immediately. It has also been decided to release further funds to the State Government on quarterly basis after receipt of proper utilisation certificate for the previous quarter.

Revival of National Security Council

2409. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revive National Security Council;

(b) if so, the details thereof with objectives;

(c) whether such a move will cost the Central exchequer heavily; and

(d) if so, the details thereof with benefits to be gained by common citizen of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) to (d) The National Security Council was constituted on 24th August, 1990, with the Prime Minister as its Chairman and Ministers of Defence, Finance, Home and External Affairs as Members. The main endeavour of the National Security Council is to evolve an integrated approach to policy making as it affects national security taking into account the linkages between the evolving external situation in the political, military and economic fields and our domestic situation.

Proposals and suggestions to restructure the National Security Council with a view to making it a more effective body for achieving the purposes for which it was constituted, are presently before the Government and while restructuring the NSC, financil implications, if any, will be taken into consideration. Besides, other mechanisms like the Cabinet Committee on Security, Strategic Policy Group and Joint Intelligence Committee are in place to address specific aspects of national security.

Wheat Smuggled to Pakistan

2410. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that significant quantity of wheat has been smuggled out to Pakistan from Punjab and Rajasthan borders;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is its impact on the procurement target and wheat prices; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to check it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) No reports regarding smuggling of wheat to pakistan from Indo-Pak border have been received and no seizures have been made by BSF. BSF troops on the border have, however, been sensitised to check the smuggling of wheat and other contraband.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Bangladeshi Infiltrators residing in the Country

2411. SHRI O. P. KHOLI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Home Minister had stated in the Parliament during the last Session that about one crore